



NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(PUBLIC AFFAIRS)**
WASHINGTON, D.C. - 20301
PLEASE NOTE DATE

1958

No. 535-94
(703)697-5131(media)
(703)697-3189(copies)
(703)697-5737(public/industry)

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 20, 1994

**REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
TO THE HENRY L. STIMSON CENTER
20 SEPTEMBER 1994**

All our adult lives, we have lived with the threat of nuclear holocaust hanging over our heads like a dark cloud, threatening the extinction of all mankind. All of my 18 predecessors as Secretary of Defense have had to accept the existence of this cloud and to deal with it by temporizing measures designed to keep a cloudburst from occurring. For example, our nuclear policies during the Cold War did not presume to solve the nuclear problem, but only to keep it from exploding.

Politicians and nuclear scientists in both the U.S. and Soviet Union were consumed by this task of "reducing the risk." The spirit of these times was captured by Andrei Sakharov, who said, "Reducing the risk of annihilating humanity in a nuclear war carries an absolute priority over all other considerations."

Now, with the end of the Cold War, that dark nuclear cloud has drifted away, and the whole world breathes easier in the sunlight. My task as the Secretary of Defense is to take what action I can to keep that cloud from drifting back to threaten the world again. The threat today is not as immediate as it was to Sakharov during the Cold War, but the consequences of failure are no less dangerous. Therefore, I have to believe along with Sakharov that this is an "absolute priority" for me.

Of course, the drifting away of the cloud was not the result of any of our Cold War nuclear policies. Rather, the dramatic reduction in the threat of nuclear war is a result of the radically changed security situation today, including a democratic, non-hostile Russia, with whom we have a new political relationship, and drastic reductions in nuclear arsenals underway.

In light of this new situation, we recently conducted a comprehensive review of our nuclear forces and policies.

-MORE-

This effort, called the Nuclear Posture Review, looked at policy, doctrine, force structure, operations, safety and security, and arms control. The Review confirmed that, with the demise of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, nuclear weapons will play a greatly changed role in our national security strategy. But in the course of the review, we also identified three problems that we must deal with as we reshape our nuclear posture:

- First, the small but real danger that reform in Russia might fail and a new government arise hostile to the United States, still armed with 25,000 nuclear weapons requires us to retain a nuclear hedge.
- Second, even with a friendly Russia, we are concerned that its overall drawdown of nuclear weapons is going more slowly than ours.
- And third, because of instabilities attendant to the drastic social, political and economic reforms underway in Russia and the other new states, we must be especially concerned with the security of nuclear components and materials in the nuclear nations of the former Soviet Union.

Russia has made tremendous strides toward reform. Political stability has increased markedly in Moscow since the siege of the Russian White House one year ago next month. Even more impressively, Russian economic reform is moving full speed ahead, with privatization as its centerpiece. In the security domain, Russia is cooperating on many fronts, from denuclearization, to joint exercises, diplomatic efforts in Bosnia and the Mideast, and membership in the Partnership for Peace.

Just to highlight one area of cooperation, two weeks ago, in Totskoye, American forces of the 3rd Infantry Division conducted joint peacekeeping training with the Russian 27th Guards Motorized Rifle Division. The exercise was a sharp contrast with the past. It took place on a remote training field where the Soviets conducted above-ground nuclear tests in the 1950s. These very divisions once faced off across the Fulda Gap, and trained to fight one another in war. Now, they've trained to work together for peace.

This is all good news.

But as I noted in a speech last spring to George Washington University, we have built a pragmatic partnership with Russia because we need to lock in these gains and successes.

There is still plenty of uncertainty. The Russian people have been trying, in a few short years, to change from an authoritarian government to a democratic government; from a state-controlled economy to a market economy. While Russia has succeeded in dismantling the controls of the previous system, the new institutions are still being created. Ukraine is experiencing similar successes and uncertainties. In short, Russia and the other states of the former Soviet Union are struggling, and will continue to struggle, with the historic changes underway.

1960

Therefore, we cannot be complacent about unforeseen outcomes of the second Soviet revolution. We must be prepared for them. Reversal of reform in Russia could jeopardize the move toward democracy, economic development, the sovereignty of its newly independent neighbors, and the prospects for global cooperation.

But the most important reason to be concerned about the future is that Russia still has about 25,000 nuclear weapons -- many more than enough to threaten our national survival.

In light of the uncertain future, and the continuing existence of this large Cold War legacy, the Nuclear Posture Review recommended that we maintain our flexibility -- a hedge -- in the following ways:

- First, we will maintain selected portions of the defense industrial base that are unique to strategic and other nuclear systems.
- Second, the U.S. Department of Defense also will maintain a strong working partnership with the Department of Energy, to ensure the soundest stewardship for our deterrent stockpile, without nuclear testing.
- And third, we will ensure, as we draw down our nuclear forces, that we have the ability to reconstitute these forces if we need to.

A second issue the Nuclear Posture Review highlighted is that we must work with Russia to speed up its lagging nuclear reduction and dismantlement.

Over the past six years, the United States has made dramatic reductions in our nuclear forces. For example:

- Our total active nuclear stockpile has been reduced by almost 60 percent, with strategic warheads cut in half and non-strategic weapons down 90 percent.
- Our long-range, strategic nuclear weapons are now down to START I levels. We have deactivated, retired or begun to dismantle all 450 Minuteman II ICBMs, Poseidon-class nuclear submarines, and the C-3 ballistic missiles based on them.
- We've terminated almost all of our nuclear modernization programs.
- We've substantially reduced our spending on strategic forces, from \$47 billion in 1984, or 13.6 percent of the overall defense budget; to \$12.4 billion today, or 5 percent of the budget.
- The Army and Marines have completely given up their nuclear roles; the Navy no longer deploys non-strategic nuclear weapons; the Air Force has dramatically cut its tactical nuclear stockpile.

This process will continue when Ukraine signs the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and START I enters into force. Then we look forward to ratification of START II.

--MORE--

1961

But in contrast to the U.S., Russia has deactivated just over half of the ballistic missiles required under START agreements. Its non-strategic nuclear warhead stockpile greatly exceeds ours. And each of the Russian armed services continues to retain a nuclear role.

This lag is partly due to internal turmoil and old thinking about the role of nuclear weapons in military security. But more importantly, denuclearization is costly and complex.

There are two ways to deal with Russia's lag.

First, the Nuclear Posture Review indicated that the United States could make further reductions in its non-strategic nuclear arsenal and, assuming START I and II are implemented fully, further reductions in our strategic force structure. I believe that if Russia rethinks its security needs and budget realities, it too will revise its plans downward, especially in the area of non-strategic forces. We would like to see Russia consolidate these non-strategic weapons in the smallest possible number of storage sites; store them under stricter safeguards and inventory control; and dismantle its older and excess weapons sooner.

A direct way to speed up the dismantling of Russia's nuclear weapons is through the Nunn-Lugar cooperative threat reduction program.

The Nunn-Lugar program provides funds to help dismantle the former Soviet nuclear arsenal, convert the Soviet weapons industry to civilian production, and generally help reduce the former Soviet force structure. It's defense by other means.

However, over the past few months, a number of questions have come up in Congress about the Nunn-Lugar program -- questions about whether it's an appropriate use of defense resources, and the rate at which we've put these funds to work. Well, let me tell you how much this program has already accomplished:

- It has helped remove more than 1,600 strategic nuclear warheads -- roughly half -- from delivery systems in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan.
- It has helped withdraw strategic systems from those nations. SS-18s are coming out of Kazakhstan and SS-25s from Belarus. Ukraine has deactivated 40 SS-19s and 37 SS-24s.
- And 3,000 former weapon scientists are being re-employed on civilian projects.

Six months ago, when I was in Ukraine, I went down, underground, 12 stories, into the former Soviet ICBM launch control center at Pervomaysk. Two young officers went through the sequence that would have been used to launch 86 missiles, carrying 700 warheads aimed at the United States. And I saw, first hand, the terror of the Cold War.

-MORE-

1962

Then we went above ground to look into one of the missile silos. It contained a huge missile, an SS-24 ICBM. But the warheads were gone. They had been removed and prepared for shipment to Russia to be dismantled. And I saw, first hand, the benefits of the end of the Cold War.

That was the Nunn-Lugar program in action. Reducing the nuclear threat does not get any more immediate, or more direct than this.

By the end of the year 2003, the Nunn-Lugar program will have helped dismantle strategic systems carrying some 8,000 nuclear warheads, bringing the Soviet nuclear arsenal down to START I and II levels.

But the benefits of Nunn-Lugar go beyond that. It also serves as a good-faith sign that the United States is willing to help these nations confront the massive task of reorienting the military establishments left behind by the Soviet Union.

The pace of Nunn-Lugar expenditures is on the fastest track possible. It takes time to negotiate the legal agreements with the recipient governments, offer bids and let contracts. The program did begin slowly, and I'm personally disappointed that it took this administration so much time to get it moving.

But a year of hard work has changed that situation dramatically, and now the program is moving quickly. Thirty-eight agreements have been reached with Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus. They commit more than \$900 million for assistance projects. And over the past nine months, the rate of obligations has increased five-fold.

Because the program is speeding up, I've just established a dedicated program office at the Pentagon to take charge of the Nunn-Lugar program in our acquisition system.

A lack of funds now threatens to derail this progress. Indeed, because of a congressionally imposed funding crunch, nuclear missile dismantlement equipment bound for Russia is just sitting on American docks, awaiting transportation funds.

Dollar for dollar, there is no better way to spend national security resources than to help destroy a former enemy's nuclear weapons and industry. It's a small investment with an enormous payoff. There would be nothing more penny wise and pound foolish than for the United States to fail to seize this investment opportunity.

That brings me to the third concern we have with Russia: the potential loss of control of former Soviet nuclear weapons, components and materials.

I'm talking not just about the danger that fissile materials will fall into the wrong hands, which was dramatized by the interception of small amounts of nuclear material on the European black market. I'm also concerned about the danger of loose tactical nuclear weapons, such as nuclear artillery shells, land mines and others. Some of these are small enough to fit in the trunk of a car.

-MORE-

The Soviet and Russian military custodians have an excellent record of control extending over half a century. But Russia's stockpiles are more numerous and varied than ours. Russia's strategic and non-strategic forces are scattered over more than 100 sites. Moreover, many of these weapons have antiquated safety and locking devices. It is critical that excess weapons be dismantled quickly, and that remaining weapons be stored in the smallest number of locations and under the strictest physical and inventory control.

Under President Clinton's leadership and Vice President Gore's work with Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, we have created several programs to improve control over fissile materials and to improve our cooperative law enforcement efforts. These cover four basic areas:

- First, ceasing production of fissile materials. The United States and Russia signed an agreement in June to shut down the remaining plutonium-producing reactors by the year 2000, and to ban the use of plutonium in weapons. We have also contracted to buy 500 tons of highly enriched uranium from Russian weapons for conversion to civil reactor fuel.
- Second, safer storage. We want to work with the Russians to construct a new storage facility for fissile material from dismantled weapons.
- Third, more cooperation. We're expanding a number of U.S.-Russian cooperative programs that ensure nuclear control and accountability -- for example, between our weapons labs. And we're working together at the highest levels, all the way up to the U.S. Secretary of Defense and Russian Defense Minister.
- And fourth, better inventories. Our countries will continue to work toward a regime to confirm the inventories of excess nuclear warheads and nuclear materials from dismantled warheads.

These are great steps, but we should go farther. In particular, we should extend our cooperative efforts to control fissile materials, and cover the weapons themselves. The Nuclear Posture Review recommends that the United States set the standard for the world by setting up the most stringent safety and security standards for our own nuclear forces. This means equipping our nuclear weapons and systems with the most modern control devices, or retiring older ones that don't incorporate the most modern features.

Once again, we would encourage Russia to take this opportunity to strengthen its own nuclear safety, security and use control methods.

In addition, consistent with U.S. legislation, we propose to share, on a reciprocal and confidential basis, data on our stockpile of nuclear warheads. These include numbers, locations, and dismantlement schedules. This would serve to encourage transparency, trust, and inventory control.

Finally, we should embark on a new cooperative initiative under the Nunn-Lugar program directed at strengthening the Russian "chain of custody" over nuclear weapons and hastening their dismantlement. But this will be possible only if Congress provides the Nunn-Lugar funds to do it.

1964

All these initiatives recognize one unfortunate truth about the post-Cold War era: Even though the superpower nuclear standoff is over, the nuclear age is not. We can't shut the lid on the nuclear Pandora's box, but we can -- and must -- limit and control the dangers it has released.

Let me close today with my vision for the U.S.-Russian nuclear relationship.

During the Cold War era, we lived under a doctrine with an acronym that perfectly captured the insanity of the superpower nuclear standoff: Mutually Assured Destruction, or MAD. For many years, it seemed that we would be locked forever in this MAD struggle. And arms control was a high-stakes chess game played by bitter enemies with a nuclear sword of Damocles hanging over our heads.

Those days are behind us.

We now have the opportunity to create a new relationship based not on MAD, not on Mutual Assured Destruction, but rather on another acronym, MAS, or Mutual Assured Safety.

What I've talked about in my speech today is nothing less than a new form of arms control, with a completely new emphasis and style. It takes advantage of the radically changed security situation with Russia and the former Soviet states. The new arms control I've outlined has four new approaches:

- It emphasizes nuclear safety, in addition to stability.
- It emphasizes cooperation to reach shared objectives, rather than pressure to make concessions.
- It focuses on carrying out existing agreements, actually eliminating the weapons we've agreed to eliminate.
- And it focuses on the real issue of nuclear safety, stability, and proliferation: bombs and bomb materials, in addition to missiles, silos, bombers and submarines.

Nearly half a century ago, Secretary of War Henry Stimson grappled with the early days of MAD. Today, as Secretary of Defense, my number-one priority is to put MAD behind us for good, to replace it with Mutual Assured Safety. We must seize the opportunity that Stimson, in his time, was denied: the opportunity to make the world a safer place.

Thank you very much.

-END-